

# Online Ortsfamilienbücher on Ofb.genealogy.net

## Germany “How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

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### GOAL

This guide will teach you to locate and navigate online Ortsfamilienbücher available at [www.ofb.genealogy.net](http://www.ofb.genealogy.net).

### INTRODUCTION

In Germany, many people have researched and compiled the genealogies of entire towns and villages. In German, these town genealogies are known as *Ortsfamilienbücher* or *Ortssippenbücher* (abbreviated as OFBs or OSBs, respectively). Genealogical data is presented in family units which are linked to ancestors and descendants. When these genealogies are available for your ancestral town, they can be very useful in helping you find your ancestors. Many OFBs are published as physical books, some of which have been digitized and can be viewed online. Other OFBs are published as online OFBs. This lesson will give instructions on how to use the online OFBs found at [www.ofb.genealogy.net](http://www.ofb.genealogy.net) (a database offered by [CompGen.de](http://CompGen.de)).

### HOW TO

The following notes will help you use OFBs:

- Dates are written in German format, not American format. This means the numbers appear in the order of day, month, and year (DD.MM.YYYY). As an example: the date 04.01.1864 is 4 January 1864, not April 1, 1864.
- OFBs use many symbols and abbreviations. The following table shows the symbols most often used in OFBs.

Symbol	Meaning
*	Birth
+*	Stillborn
get. / ≈	Baptism
∞	Marriage
∞	Divorce
+	Death

For a longer list of symbols and abbreviations, see the handout prepared by the St. Louis County Library: <https://www.slcl.org/sites/default/files/HG%20OSB%20symbols.pdf>.

## Using Online-OFBs at Genealogy.net

1. Access the Online-OFBs database at <https://ofb.genealogy.net/>.
2. You will see a map of Europe with hundreds of red location markers, followed by a list of all the OFBs available at this site. The list is organized alphabetically by the individual German states, followed by countries or regions outside of present-day Germany with German settlements. Within each state, country or region, the towns are also listed alphabetically.
3. The left column includes links to view the latest OFBs added online, as well as the associations and organizations involved in the project.
4. The German diacritics Ä, ä, Ö, ö, Ü, ü, and ß are all used on this site. Place names including diacritics are listed in alphabetical order alongside names without diacritics. Scroll down to Pommern and find the town of **Bärwalde**. It is listed before Basenthin.
5. Find **Groß Dölln, Brandenburg**. Use Ctrl+F (or Cmd+F) to find the location. When using this search method, the Umlaut does not need to be included, the regular letter can be used. Also, 'ss' can be used instead of 'ß'.
6. Now, find **Eichhorn, East Prussia**. Note the current Polish name for the town of Eichhorn is Wiewiórki.
7. Click on "Eichhorn" to access the introduction or overview page of the Eichhorn OFB.
8. For Eichhorn, this page includes a photo of the cemetery and surrounding area, the names of villages within the parish, a brief history of the village of Eichhorn, its current Polish name, a description about how the book was compiled and sources used, a note about surname variations, and contact information.
9. The left column now includes:
  - a. links to
    - i. Gesamtliste der Familiennamen (Complete list of surnames),
    - ii. Geburtsorte auswärtiger Personen (Birthplaces of non-residents), and
    - iii. Sterbeorte weggezogener Personen (Places of death for people who have moved away),
  - b. the number of individuals and families in the book, and
  - c. a list of flags representing different languages.
10. Clicking on a flag will show the information on the webpage in that language if the webpage has been translated into the selected language. Not all OFBs have been translated into all languages. The page for Eichhorn has not be translated into any of the languages listed.

*Note:* Other options of translating the page include using the Google Translate feature when using Google Chrome as your web browser or using [translate.google.com](https://translate.google.com). For the first method, right-click anywhere on the screen and select Translate to English [or your language]. For the second option, go directly to [translate.google.com](https://translate.google.com) and change the language settings to translate from German to English [or your language]. Copy the OFB webpage link and paste it into the German box. Click on the link that appears in the English [or your language] box and you will be taken to a translated version of the webpage.

11. Click on "Gesamtliste der Familiennamen" (Complete list of surnames).

12. You will see names starting with the letter “A” below a row of the alphabet. When searching for a surname, you can click on the first letter of that surname. For some books, there is also the option to click on “alle” (all) to see a list of all surnames.
13. In our example, search for the name **Rudolph Franz Marklein**. Click on the letter “M.” Find the surname “MARKLEIN” (different than Marcklin) and click on it. Find Rudolph Franz in the lower half of the list.
14. Click on “MARKLEIN, Rudolph Franz.” You should see a family page like this:

**Local heritage book Eichhorn**  
**Family report**

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♂ **Rudolph Franz MARKLEIN**  
 \* 14.06.1864 in Neukrug

**Bemerkungen: (notes)**

**Familien (families)**  
 Keine Familie gefunden!  
 (No family found!)

**Eltern (parents)**

<b>Vater:</b> (father)	♂ <b>Hermann ADOLPH MARKLEIN</b> * 05.09.1835 in Glomsien
<b>Mutter:</b> (mother)	♀ <b>Caroline SCHIPPER</b> * 15.01.1842 in Dörsen + 17.01.1903 in Kraphausen

**Quellen: (sources)**

Source:  
<https://ofb.genealogy.net/famreport.php?ofb=eichhorn&ID=I13829&nachname=Marklein&modus=&som=y&lang=en> :  
 accessed 14 July 2021.

Es gibt (eine) ähnliche Person(en) in anderen OFBs.  
 Einblenden!

**Kinder (children)**  
 Keine Kinder in den vorliegenden Quellen gefunden!  
 (No children found in used sources!)

**Geschwister (siblings)**

♂ **Hermann Adolph MARKLEIN** \* 1866 in Neukrug  
 ♂ **Karl Gustav MARKLEIN** \* 1868 in Neukrug, + 1868 in Neukrug  
 ♀ **Heinriette Bertha MARKLEIN** \* 1870 in Neukrug, + 1870 in Neukrug  
 ♀ **Justine Wilhelmine MARKLEIN** \* 1872 in Neukrug

15. The family page for Rudolph Franz Marklein provides the following information:
 

Rudolph was born on 14 June 1864 in Neukrug.  
 On the introduction page Neukrug had been identified as one of the villages included in the parish of Eichhorn.

No family (meaning spouses) or children were found. No records of a marriage or any children were found for him in this location.

His parents were:

Hermann Adolph Marklein born on 5 September 1835 in Glomsien, another village belonging to the parish of Eichhorn.

Caroline Schipper born on 15 January 1842 in Dörsen, Eichhorn parish. She died on 17 January 1903 in Kraphausen, not included in the Eichhorn parish.

His four younger siblings were:



Hermann Adolph Marklein born in 1866 in Neukrug.  
 Karl Gustav Marklein born and died in 1868 in Neukrug.  
 Heinriette Bertha Marklein born and died in 1870 in Neukrug.  
 Justine Wilhelmine Marklein born in 1872 in Neukrug.
16. The box in the top right corner indicates that one or more similar individuals appear in other OFBs. Click on the blue word to see details about the individual(s).
17. Each name is clickable. Clicking on a name will place that individual at the top of a family page, and list any available information about their spouse, children, parents, siblings, and similar individuals in other OFBs.
18. To trace the family line back, click on the parents. To identify descendants, click on the children's names to see if they married and had children.

19. In our example, click on Rudolph's father's name "Hermann ADOLPH MARKLEIN."
20. Hermann Adolph is now at the top of the page. His page provides additional information about him, such as his baptism or christening date and place, the names of his godparents, his occupation, his marriage date and place, and notes from his marriage record. Information about his parents and fourteen siblings is also provided.
21. Click on Hermann's father's name "Gottfried MARCKLIN" to trace the family back another generation.

### Further training on *Ortsfamilienbücher*

To learn more about using this site and some of the additional features available, view the free webinar available in the FamilySearch Learning Center. This webinar also reviews how to use printed copies of OFBs.

If you are viewing this "How to" Guide online, click [here](#). If you are viewing this "How to" Guide in printed form, follow these steps to find the webinar:

- Go to the FamilySearch homepage at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).
- Click on the question mark in the top right corner. 
- In the dropdown box, click on "Help Center."
- On the Help Center page, find the section titled "Search by Topic" (with the colorful round icons) and click on "View All."
- Click on the yellow icon for "Online Courses." 
- On the Learning Center page, in the search box, type in the word "Ortsfamilienbuch" and click on "Search" or press the "Enter" key.
- Click on the webinar called "Ortsfamilienbücher/Ortssippenbücher: How to Use Online OFBs at Genealogy.net." Additional short webinars are also available which cover general information about OFBs, where to find them, and how to use printed OFBs.

### PRACTICE

Follow along with the steps below to find the date of birth for Anna Sophia Rehbaum using the OFB for Wilhelmshausen.

1. Go to the website <https://ofb.genealogy.net/>.
2. Find **Wilhelmshausen**.
3. Click on the town name.
4. On the introduction page for this OFB we see that this OFB includes three villages. The notes explain why they were combined.
5. Click on "English" or the British flag in the left column.
6. The website is now in English, but the introduction has not been translated into English.
7. NOTE: If you wanted to translate the introduction, you would need to click on the German flag or "Deutsch," and follow step 9 above (see page 5).

8. At the top of the left column, under “Funktionen” (Functions), click on “Gesamtliste der Familiennamen” (Complete List of Surnames).
9. Click on the letter “R,” then click on the surname “Rehbaum.”
10. You will see a list of all the Rehbaums in this book, listed alphabetically by first given name.
11. Go down the list (or use Ctrl+F) to find **Anna Sophia**. She is the ninth name on the list (born on 25 February 1767 in Knickhagen).
12. Click on her name.
13. On her family page, you will find the following:

Her husband’s name (Johannes Henricus Kastrop) with his birth, marriage, and death information.

No children were found for this couple.

The names, birth and death dates and places of both of her parents and eight siblings.
14. Click on her father’s name to go back another generation. Keep clicking on the father’s name of each family page you view. You will be able to add three more generations past Anna Sophia.

## ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this “How to” Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you’ve mastered the Guide. Click [here](#) to try out the Activity.